



## Enclosure #11

# Montana Association of Counties

*Serving Montana Counties Since 1909*

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**EDUCATION & LOCAL GOV'T IC**  
**JUNE 18, 2012**  
**EXHIBIT 27**

December 8, 2011

Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee  
Montana Legislature

Representative Hollandsworth and Committee members,

The 2011 Montana Legislature passed HB 123, a bill that changed many dates related to the school and local government budgeting process. Prior to the passage of this bill, there were several conflicts in the dates when certain things took place. HB 123 looked at the total amount of time available between when the Department of Revenue certifies taxable values until property tax bills are sent to taxpayers and sought to as fairly as possible apportion that time to the various entities and elected officials in order to make all of the pieces fit together.

From my observations of this last budgeting cycle I believe that the process generally went quite smoothly although will admit that there were some schools, special districts, municipalities and counties that in some cases did not meet statutory deadlines. I believe that in most cases these delays were caused by lack of knowing about the changes or simply not understanding the process. That most often occurs where there are new staff who are responsible to getting the work done. I would anticipate that we will see fewer of these delays in the future as everyone becomes more familiar with the process. To the best of my knowledge, the Department of Revenue was on time with all of their work.

We have however encountered three sections of statute that were overlooked in HB 123 so a cleanup bill will be needed in 2013. The stakeholders, including the Montana School Boards Association, County Superintendents Association, Office of Public Instruction, MACo and others will be taking a request for a cleanup bill to the Education and Local Government Committee but we wanted to advise your committee that a bill will be forthcoming. This is informational to you and we are not requesting any action on the part of the Revenue and Transportation Committee. The needed changes are attached and are to make the dates in 7-6-4036, 7-6-4024 and 7-11-1025 comport with the new dates for setting levies.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information on behalf of the stakeholders,

L Harold Blattie, Executive Director  
Montana Association of Counties